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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 000886

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD/DIBBLE;  
NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR  
DS/IP/NEA;  
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN; USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP, PRM FOR  
DEWEY/GREENE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [GZ](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: FEBRUARY 14, 2005 (1300 HOURS LOCAL)  
-- GOI APPROVES PRISONER RELEASE; ONE PALESTINIAN KILLED IN  
WEST BANK

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

**11.** (SBU) Summary: Palestinian militants launched three shooting attacks at IDF and Israeli settler targets February 11-14, including one in which militants fired on Israeli laborers who were putting up a fence along the Kissufim Road. No injuries were reported. The GOI agreed February 14 to the release of some 500 Palestinian prisoners, all of whom must have served at least two-thirds of their sentences and have no "blood on their hands" from direct attacks against Israelis. The bodies of 15 Palestinian militants were to be handed over in Gaza February 14 as a good will gesture to Abu Mazen. In the West Bank, the IDF shot and killed a Palestinian man February 14 who reportedly attacked an IDF soldier with a knife in Nablus. Abu Mazen named BG Mahmoud Asfour as acting commander of Gaza and West Bank police on February 12, according to Palestinian security sources, replacing Sa,eb al-Ajaz, whose resignation, along with those of eight other security commanders, was accepted last week after the Hamas shelling of Gaza settlements. End Summary.

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West Bank  
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**12.** (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: The IDF shot and killed a Palestinian man who reportedly attacked an IDF soldier with a knife in Nablus on February 14, according to an IDF spokesman.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Arrests: The IDF arrested a PFLP activist in Bayt Rima, north of Ramallah, on February 11, according to Palestinian sources.

-- Arrests: The IDF arrested a Hamas activist in Hebron, a Palestinian policeman in East Jerusalem, and three Palestinians in Qalqiliya on February 13-14, according to Palestinian sources.

-- Incursion: The IDF entered Salfit on Saturday, February 12, and checked IDs of several Palestinian men, but left without making an arrest, according to Palestinian sources.

**13.** (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- PA sources said that Israel will officially turn over security control of Jericho to the PA on February 15, followed by Qalqiliya and Tulkarm next week.

-- Abu Mazen named BG Mahmoud Asfour as acting commander of Gaza and West Bank police on February 12, according to Palestinian security sources, replacing Sa,eb al-Ajaz, whose resignation, along with those of eight other security commanders, was accepted last week after the Hamas shelling of Gaza settlements.

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Gaza  
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**14.** (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF did not report any rocket or mortar fire February 11-14. UNRWA reported that IDF tanks fired three shells towards the Egyptian border with Rafah February 14, apparently towards suspected smugglers.

-- Shootings: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants launched three shooting attacks at IDF and Israeli settler targets February 11-14. UNRWA said that in one of these attacks on February 11, militants fired on Israeli laborers who were putting up a fence along the Kissufim Road. No injuries were reported in any of these attacks.

-- Explosions: PA security forces found and, in coordination with the IDF, safely deactivated two explosive devices: one near Morag February 11 and a second near an IDF outpost west of Rafah February 13.

-- Arrests: Israeli media reported that settlers from Gush Katif blocked the Abu Khouli/Gush Katif interchange February 11, throwing stones at Palestinian vehicles in protest against rocket and mortar fire on the settlements. IDF troops arrested seven settlers and re-opened the checkpoint after approximately two hours, according to UNRWA.

15. (SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS: Nil.

16. (SBU) INTRA-PALESTINIAN VIOLENCE:

-- UNRWA and Palestinian sources reported that the families of two men killed February 10 in the attack on the central prison in the Suraya complex in Gaza City (see February 10 SitRep) blocked the main coastal road near Nuseirat February 13, disrupting traffic for two hours until dispersed by PA police.

-- Catch-up item: UNRWA reported that, in addition to the three prisoners killed in the February 10 attack on the Central Prison in Gaza City, four PA security officers were also shot and injured.

17. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open February 12-14, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction. As of February 9, Abu Khouli checkpoint is open 24 hours a day, although still subject to sporadic closures due to security alerts. Private cars, however, are still prohibited from crossing the checkpoint.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and for a limited number of Palestinian merchants February 12. On February 13, Israel re-opened the crossing to Palestinian laborers as well, and 207 laborers and 75 merchants crossed into Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was partially open, and 300 laborers entered the zone February 13.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers February 12-14, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open for limited imports and exports February 12-14.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures February 12-14, except for men between the ages of 16-35.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed February 12-14. Toufah checkpoint was open for female residents of al-Mowassi, and for males under age 16 and over age 35.

18. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- Israeli media reported that the GOI agreed February 14 to the release of some 500 of the approximately 7,600 Palestinian prisoners being held in Israeli jails. According to a GOI communique, the prisoners who will be released must have served at least two-thirds of their sentences and have no "blood on their hands" from direct attacks against Israelis. Media also reported that the bodies of 15 Palestinian militants were to be handed over in Gaza February 14 as a good will gesture to Abu Mazen.

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